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ABSTRACT

This issue of "Media & Values" explores the growing influence of mass media on the election process in the United States. The essays present various interpretations of that influence and the implications for the nation. The magazine is divided into three sections. The introductory section includes: (1) "Where Have All the Leaders Gone?" (Daniel Schorr); (2) "Packaging Politics: Truth or Consequences" (Kathleen Jamieson); and (3) "Money, Media and 'Electability'" (Kathy Bonk). Section 2, "Election Reflections: An Issue Forum," contains the essays: (1) "Power Politics: Reporting the Real Issues" (Robert Manoff); (2) "A Journalist's View: Reaching Beyond Images" (Cokie Roberts); (3) "Democracy Requires Access to Media Alternatives" (Sharon Maeda); (4) "Liberate Candidates with Free TV" (Hazel Henderson); (5) "Whatever Happened to the Voter?" (Gordon Feller); (6) "Of Money and Politics" (Senator Ted Stevens; Senator Alan Cranston); (7) "Press Conferences: Linking President and People" (Norman Cousins); and (8) "Local Groups Raise Level of Media Debate" (Katherine Ragsdale). Section 3, "Reflection/Action," includes: (1) "Women: First Ladies Convey Feminine Independence" (Sally Steenland); (2) "Children: TV Tool Teaches Election Basics" (Judith Myers-Walls); (3) "Pastoring: Faith Can Counter Campaign Cynicism" (Peter Paulsen); (4) "Minorities: TV Images Reflect Changing America" (Carlos Cortes); (5) "Global Scene: Voters Still Seeking Leadership, Vision" (Keval Joseph Kumar); (6) "Family Life: Standing Up for Ideas and Dreams" (Helen Graham); and (7) "Youth: Training Creates Media Wise Voters" (Bill Wolfe). (EH)

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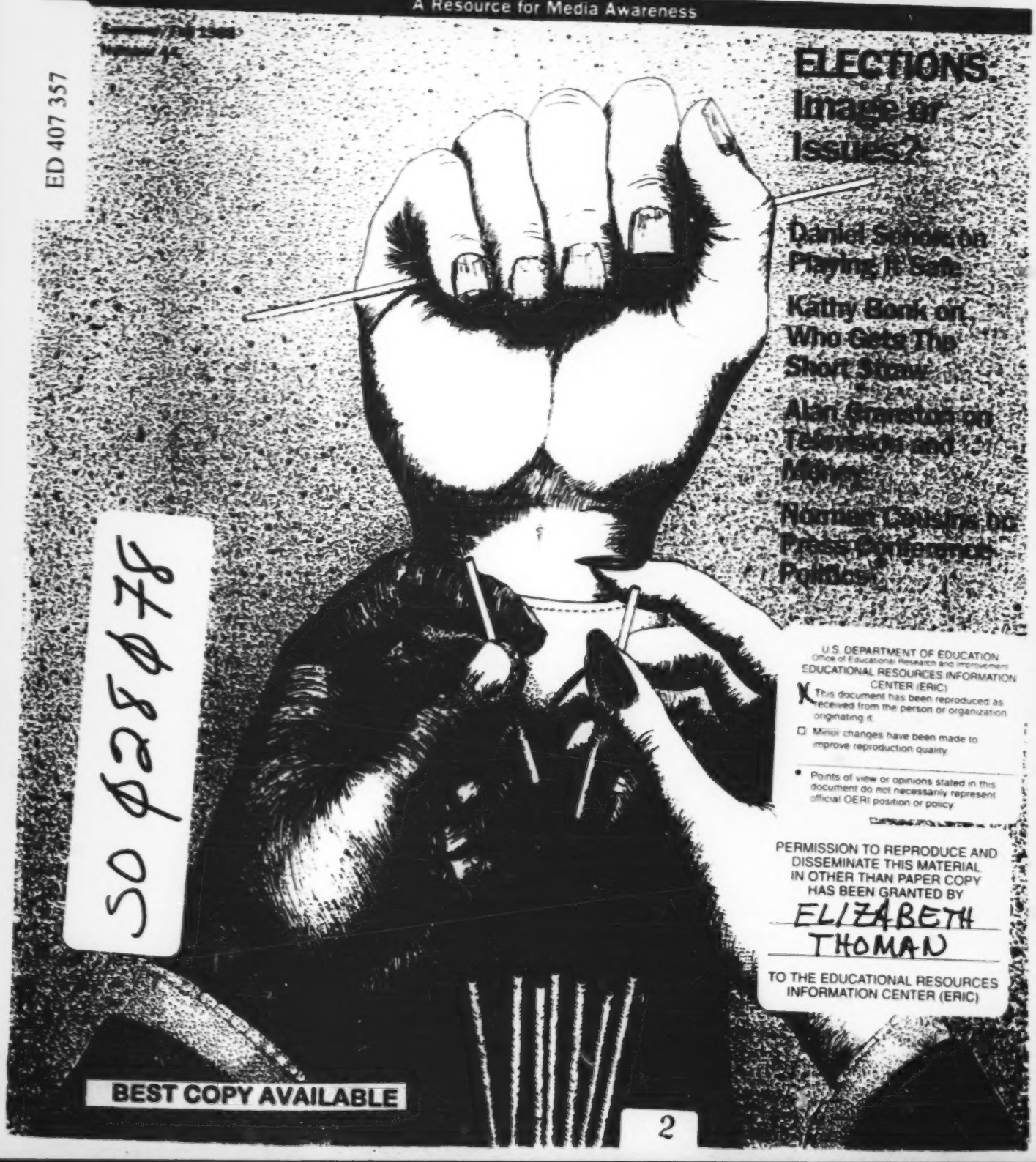
Media&Values

A Resource for Media Awareness



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ELECTIONS: Image or Issues?

Daniel Schorr on Playing It Safe

Kathy Bonk on Who Gets The Short Straw

Alan Granston on Television and Money

Norman Solomon on Press Conference Politics

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ELIZABETH THOMAN

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Media&Values

is a unique resource to stimulate awareness, creative thinking and reflective action on the media issues of our time. As a magazine, *Media&Values* came early to the recognition that emerging media and new technology — from computers to video to satellites — could bind or separate human beings, but would leave no one unchanged.

"Recognizing that the media environment in which we live is a major agent of socialization and directly affects the quality of life for individuals and the society at large, our purpose is to challenge and enable both media consumers and media industries to raise questions about and to claim greater responsibility for that media environment."

— Statement of Purpose

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STARTING POINT

Whatever happened to potholders?

You know, the ones we always used to get at election time, dropped off by door-to-door canvassers on their appointed neighborhood rounds.

Or we got them at rallies in the school cafeteria. My parents may have gone to debate the issues, but for us kids, bringing home those potholders was one of our first lessons in civic responsibility.

In 1986 the California Senate race was the most expensive Senate campaign in history. Between them Alan Cranston and Ed Zchau raised nearly $28 million. Of that, over $20 million went to media expenses: buying time, producing spots and programs, hiring consultants and polling voters in order to determine how to better position their candidates for the evening news.

The remaining few million was spent on everything else: airplanes, hotel rooms, office space, telephones, salaries, etc. Long gone are the days when money raised for political campaigns went back into the community — for precinct captains and neighborhood rallies, canvassers and their limitless supply of potholders. The fact of the matter is that the need for mass media, particularly television, has so shifted the cash flow out of the community and into technology as to markedly change the electoral process in this country.

We cannot, of course, ever go back to the way things were before TV. But the challenge of democracy in an electronic era is an issue we can no longer ignore. Thanks to the many authors whose contributions are featured in this special issue of Media& Values. They give all of us much to think and talk about.

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Librarians and others will note that this issue is labeled Summer/Fall. It is not really a double issue but simply a reorganization of our schedule to publish at the beginning of each season. Our next issue, due out in November, will be dated Winter, 1989.

Elizabeth Thoman

Executive Editor

Media&Values

Summer/Fall 1988 Number 44

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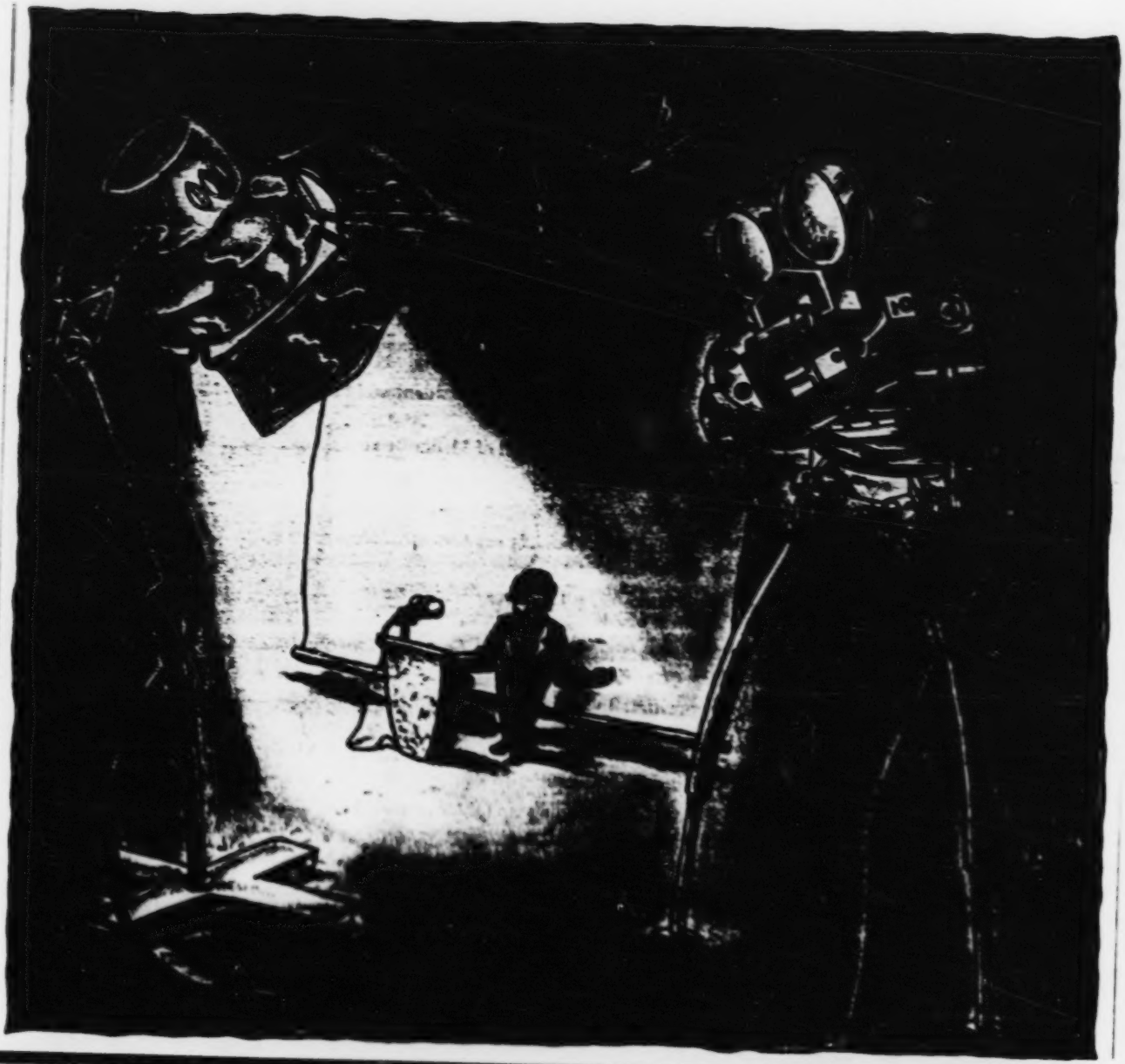
Next Issue: *Media and the Aging Audience*

WHERE HAVE ALL THE LEADERS GONE?

Television screens out originality and rewards candidates who play it safe.



By Daniel Schorr

When I started in TV news all those years ago I asked an old timer (he'd actually been in the industry a couple of years) about the secret of success in television.

"Sincerity," he said. "If you can fake sincerity you've got it made."

To me that explains the pitfalls of TV's election coverage. We've learned that fake sincerity isn't enough. But we don't know what to replace it with. We're hungry for leadership, for charisma. But the system we've created gives undue emphasis to phony charisma and, more important, works to prevent any real leadership and individuality from developing.

I think it's pretty significant that it's the home stretch in the 1988 primaries, and *Newsweek*'s cover story is about a political candidate who died 20 years ago — Bobby Kennedy. And if you ask: "What was it that Bobby Kennedy had that is missing today?" the answer is — passion. Everybody now is looking for passion in a candidate. And they can't find it. Kennedy was remarkable in his ability to appeal to almost every group, without pandering to them. And the key rested not only in his personality, but in what has changed in conditions. In 1968 it was possible for somebody to strike a spark and go out and campaign and be accepted for what he was. Now it isn't.

What we're getting now instead is a totally different kind of campaign. The political process is not trying to turn on anything so much as it is responsive to the media itself. It's the product of 20 years in which the media has selected out certain kinds of people and rewarded others. So now in 1988, we get another kind of candidate, the kind whose first question is: "What is it that will succeed on the media? What is it that my consultants say people want to hear?"

Twenty years ago you knew where charisma came from: it came from inside. Now charisma is applied from outside, like pancake makeup.

Creating the Image

What's happened in those 20 years is that somehow the media have managed to establish their dominance to the point at which people are afraid to be themselves or, in fact, don't even know how to be themselves. There comes a point at which — Reagan is a prime example — whatever it is you think you ought to be, you become. And then you are. Your image is established externally, and then you become that image, and that's all there is — there isn't an inner or an outer. I think Dukakis today is like that, and Jesse Jackson combines that with a little bit of old-time religion and the Baptist tradition, which works very well on television.

Early in this campaign, I found that we were going through a very odd interaction. People didn't believe anybody and kept asking, "Who is the real candidate?" They didn't know what they meant, but they were looking for somebody other than whom they were getting. And then, still being unsatisfied, they tended to react rather negatively to what was going on. As a result, in the first few states, you found that whatever you would have called momentum, the voters tended to defy. Therefore, after Iowa, you tended to say, "OK, it's Dole," and it turned out in New Hampshire not to be Dole. The voters seemed to be saying, "Oh no, whatever you seem to expect, we will give you a surprise."

Interestingly enough, the night of the New Hampshire primary was a big night for the winter Olympics in Calgary. It was almost a surreal experience to be switching back and forth from ABC presenting the Olympics, to the other two networks carrying live reports from New Hampshire, because the coverage of the two events seemed to resemble each other. Everyone in New Hampshire seemed to revel in the fact that Dole had fallen on his face. Then you could turn the channel and hear how Dan Jansen, the speed skater, had fallen on his face.

The point is this: It's exciting to watch someone fall on his face. When you watch a spectator sport, the most thrilling moment is the upset. That's what politics has become: a spectator sport.

That brings us to the other key problem. By definition, spectators don't participate. Instead of voting, people are excited to sit home and find out what other voters did. But despite the interest of the contest, I think voters are really being turned off by the whole process. They don't know who the candidates are, they don't know what they represent, none of them seems to have any charisma — it's all a kind of choice of lesser evils and why bother — the excitement anyway comes in finding out what Dan Rather or Peter Jennings says about it. As this process continues, the psyche of Americans is slowly being turned away from the whole political process.

"One of the most perceptive comments about TV coverage of the 1984 presidential campaign came from a top adviser to Walter Mondale. He noted that television had been manipulated beautifully by the Reagan campaign, because the Reagan people understood better than anyone how irresistibly drawn TV news is to good visuals."

Judy Woodruff,
MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour

The News Tonight

Unfortunately, it's easier to analyze the problem than come up with a solution. Journalists keep going to meetings, like one I attended recently, where they talk about "focusing more on the issues and less on the foibles of the candidates." And

even while they're saying it, they know damn well that as soon as they leave that room they're going to forget all that and go back to what's news tonight and what increases ratings and what people want to hear about.

Television journalism is actually a very small corner in the universe of television,

> ***"I wish we had the guts to say 'today Candidate X campaigned at six stops and didn't say a damned thing.'"***
>
> **Richard Salant, former president, CBS News**

sharing a stage very uncomfortably with a big show-biz industry, trying to introduce an element of reality into a medium whose whole thrust is toward unreality and fantasy. But it tries, and sometimes it succeeds better and sometimes worse. When people criticize the media they are really criticizing the power of television rather than the power of journalism on television — a power that is generally overestimated. The function of journalists, for whatever small effect it can have, is to serve as an antidote to the rest of it. That's why it's so unfortunate that we've lost our sense of responsibility about providing background. Twenty-five years ago when I was at CBS, we felt it was our job to go after these people, be they Democrats or Republicans, and provide a context for them. That's not done any more, but it would be a good thing to go back to it, if anyone's willing to try.

Even better commentary, however, doesn't solve the basic problem that I alluded to before — the screening out of originality that occurs from the first moment candidates appear on camera. All candidates have taken a television seminar that teaches them you must be safe and unoriginal. So you can't have a De Gaulle or a Churchill, maybe not even a Franklin Roosevelt, anymore. Can you imagine them being interviewed by Jane Pauley on the *Today* show, accepting the constraints of commercial television, speaking in 45-second sound bursts?

Becoming Bland

Today, you don't want to alienate any fraction of that mass audience that may be watching you. So you are forced to be defensive, and those who are not tend to be selected out. And the result is, over a generation, that those who might have expressed original ideas don't express them — maybe don't even have them anymore. And where there were many mavericks before, there are few mavericks today. Not to mention that if you stutter, it doesn't matter how brilliant or how great an administrator you are, you can't do it. If you can't formulate a thought in 45 seconds, you're out, because television has its own requirements.

When I consider modern politics, I can't help thinking of something that happened when I traveled with Reagan to Europe in 1982. People would keep saying to me, "Your president is really a formidable person. That speech he made!... 45 minutes without a note."

And I'd have to say, "You mean you don't know about the teleprompter?"

There's no question that Reagan really is a superb artist in the use of the teleprompter. That was one of the big advantages he had over Mondale in 1984. It clarifies one of the major points of modern politics — the tremendous advantage possessed by the person who can use television well.

Of course, politicians have always made the most of the tools available to them. The Founding Fathers could write. The orators of the 19th Century used their rhetorical ability. But the ability to use television well has little to do with what a candidate thinks, very little to do with intellectual ability, and absolutely no connection with the ability to govern.

What journalists can do about this is actually very little. But the public might do something, if it can conquer its passivity and naiveté.

I'd hardly like to recommend that people stop voting, but maybe in one way it's a good sign. The people staying home have recognized that what's happening on television has become the most meaningful part of the process. Maybe that's the start of a few other, more aware people saying, "Wake up. Wake up. Our destiny is in our hands, not in the hands of these 'charismatic' people." Maybe that will start right here.

Daniel Schorr is a senior news analyst for National Public Radio. During his more than 25 years at CBS News he was a foreign correspondent and reporter on the Watergate case.

The Selling of the President: 1984

During the 1984 campaign I decided to do a very long piece on President Reagan for the evening news. It ran almost five and a half minutes. It was a piece that was the toughest I had ever done on Reagan, maybe one of the toughest ever done on him up to that point.

The thrust of it was that he wasn't telling the truth, that he was trying to create amnesia about his budget cuts, and about policies that had become unpopular. We showed him in front of a nursing home, where he was cutting a ribbon, and what he doesn't tell you is that he tried to cut the budget for nursing homes.

The next day, a senior White House official called to thank me. I said, "Come on, it was a tough piece; what are you talking about?"

And he said, "You guys haven't figured it out yet, have you? When you run great-looking pictures of Ronald Reagan, the public doesn't hear what you say. They just see the pictures. It was a five and a half minute campaign ad."

Another reporter, Marty Schramm, later discovered that every photo taken of Reagan was planned in advance by his key campaign aide Michael Deaver and company. They'd choose a spot, find a backdrop, then select the best angle for the President. Virtually no picture taken of the President during the campaign was not planned by them. And my piece was plastered with these gorgeous pictures. In effect, every single picture you saw was designed by a Hollywood set designer.

— Leslie Stahl, CBS News, *The Journalist*

PACKAGING POLITICS:
Truth or Consequences

By Kathleen Jamieson

Are elections sold to media buyers? Do 30-second sound bites determine the way a nation votes?

Twenty years ago, "the selling of the presidency" became a catch phrase. Today, political advertising is itself a controversial issue. But in the preliminary relay races and one-day final sale represented by modern elections, increasing media sophistication and rising costs have made the issue of campaign advertising more complicated than whether it turns candidates into commodities.

As a long-time student of political campaigns, I have concluded that the influence of political advertising has been grossly exaggerated. Despite the millions spent, no candidate can win an election on advertising alone. And campaign strategists have another problem. They are like business executives who complain that they know only half their advertising is effective — but don't know which half. The effects of any piece of campaign advertising are very hard to estimate.

The deeper issue, it seems to me, is the question of truth in advertising.

An incident from the early 1988 primary campaign presented a good example. Before the Texas primary, presidential candidate Sen. Albert Gore aired an ad advocating putting Americans back to work in oil fields. Its impact went flat when his opponent, Rep. Richard Gephardt, pointed out that "Al Gore has voted consistently against every oil import fee proposal."

In round two, during a debate prior to Super Tuesday, candidate Gore delivered a carefully planned, 58-second indictment of Gephardt. "Dick, you voted against the minimum wage every time you had a chance to. If you had your way, it would still be $2.20 an hour."

Within days, that clip from the debate was being aired as an ad for Gore. That both candidates — and their spots — were later eliminated from the campaign was hardly the point. By showing how candidates police each other's ads, their exchange typifies the limits of political advertising and the internal sanctions that discourage — though not eliminate — its misuse.

Analysis of the 1988 primary campaigns indicates that there are four internal constraints — media surveillance, perception of issues, the need to present a consistent image and the fear of backlash — that tie the candidates to reasonable presentation of themselves and their opponents.

Fear of Criticism

If media scrutiny weren't widely feared by campaign managers, they wouldn't struggle so hard to prevent it. At least since Joe McGinniss dissected the Nixon campaign, reporters have put each succeeding campaign under the microscope. Criticism of campaign advertising has become its own art form, facilitated by media preview sessions designed to provide wide, low-cost exposure for campaign advertising.

In recent campaigning, politicos have sometimes struck back by keeping ads under wraps until they air. For example, Ronald Reagan's 1984 run of "It's Morning in America" feel-good ads were widely panned by skeptical political reporters. Media experts enhanced their impact by withholding the September, 1984 Reagan documentary from preview sessions.

Although they provide some guidelines, broadcast regulations are limited in the restraints they can place on political advertising. First Amendment restrictions that protect free speech also protect candidates' right to lie. Stations that accept an ad from one candidate for an office must accept ads submitted by other bona fide candidates.

The spread of cable to half the homes in the United States has provided a new

opportunity to candidates eager to stretch their budgets, as Jesse Jackson did by spending his entire $24,000 Iowa media budget on Cable News Network and ESPN. Cable is harder for media watchdogs to monitor. Not even the most diligent newsperson can monitor 5,000 cable systems. But it's hard to imagine a successful modern campaign subsisting on cable advertising alone.

Avoiding Backlash

Clips from ads that never aired, such as a member explaining why the Klan endorsed Goldwater, or a 1972 Democratic ad featuring the famous film of the Vietnamese mother running along a road with her napalmed dead infant, demonstrate the fear of negative reaction to perceptibly unfair attacks. The famous 1964 *Daisy* ad, which preceded a nuclear blast with pictures of a little girl "counting down" by pulling petals off a daisy, is an example of an ad that did run and was very effective despite criticism of its fairness.

Although ads can criticize, even attack, the forms they choose to make their points must do more than avoid charges of unfairness. They must also fit within a set of cultural norms and values. Thus, in 1956, Adlai Stevenson's supporters avoided focusing on President Eisenhower's poor health, although it was a legitimate campaign issue.

In 1988, a Gephardt commercial calling candidate Michael Dukakis, the governor of Massachusetts, "one of the biggest tax raisers in the state's history" didn't sit well with New Hampshire voters. As the residents of a neighboring state, they knew Dukakis had cut taxes five times in four years and raised them only once.

Thanks to these pressures, unrestrained ads are usually confined to fringe candidates appealing to a narrow constituency or an ideological extreme. During the 1984 campaign, some voters found comic relief in Lyndon LaRouche ads attacking Henry Kissinger as a Soviet agent and claiming that Moscow endorsed Gary Hart and Walter Mondale but hated LaRouche.

In general, however, less truthful ads are more likely to air in small media markets away from the watchful eyes of media reporters and commentators. Unfair attacks are much more likely to appear in print form, in local media or even as hand-delivered flyers.

Consistent Image

Duplicitous ads are minimized as well by campaigners' recognition of the need to present a unified image in ads, news and debates.

Broadcast and print advertising must also dovetail with the theme of the campaign and the candidate's impact on audiences and reporters. When paid and unpaid messages conflict, the credibility of the campaign is undercut. When news and ads are consistent, the effect of both is magnified. In the 1988 primaries, for example, Robert Dole became vulnerable to charges that he was straddling the tax issue after refusing to sign a "no tax increase" pledge. His refusal to sign may have made sense as long-term policy, but its conflict with other campaign messages made it easier to pin the "indecisive" label on him.

Subtext and Substance

Critics of political advertising often complain that ads give issues short shrift. But even image advertising is constrained to take its cue from the national agenda of issues and themes. The first post-Watergate campaign in 1976 focused on trustworthiness. By the same logic, early 1988 candidates stressed their management abilities in an attempt to counter fears of future Contragate scandals, and surviving candidates stressed vision and leadership during later primaries.

"Not all media attention is created equal. If it conflicts with the campaign's themes and messages or if it makes a candidate appear frivolous and desperate for the attention, it can hurt."

John Yang,
Wall Street Journal

While voters complain about the lack of solid information in spot ads, candidates themselves are often eager to convey the details of their programs. Yet TV surveys reveal that watchers often tune out media messages that feature policies and statistics. During 1984 and 1988, campaigns experimented with ads designed to hold attention. A spectacular example is the half-hour "documentary" that launched Ronald Reagan's general election campaign. Aired on all three networks at the same time, the expensive multiple broadcast was designed to frustrate channel switchers.

Using other techniques borrowed from product advertising, campaign ads may feature numbers to call for more information, brochure offers and even disclaimers, like the tag on some Dukakis ads proclaiming that he refused to take Political Action Committee money and providing a toll free number to call to donate to the campaign.

Reaching Out

In general, new technology helps candidates reach more voters at less cost. Techniques from videocassettes to satellite transmission have helped candidates reach more people more often without leaving a New York studio or a hotel room in Kansas City.

There is no disputing, however, that advertising and other media are indispensable tools in a world of increasing media sophistication, party fragmentation and high expectations for would-be leaders.

As in other areas of the media/politics relationship, viewers probably get the kind of advertising they deserve. Demands for more information may be followed by more responsive advertising. Viewer disapproval of unfairness will result in more cautious candidates.

Ultimately, voters must be protected by habits honed in other areas. The most effective advertisement in the world can't reach a viewer who zaps past it, or who escapes it for the kitchen or bathroom. Natural skepticism after exposure to a lifetime of commercials is at least a partial protection against the worst abuses of political advertising.

The wise voter will make political ads the first source of information about the candidates, not the last. But even the unwary and uninformed are somewhat protected by the mechanics of the process. Which is fortunate, because despite its drawbacks, political advertising is here to stay.

Kathleen Hall Jamieson is the G.B. Dealey Professor of Communication at the University of Texas/Austin and author of Packaging the Presidency, Eloquence in an Electronic Age *and of a forthcoming book,* Presidential Debates: The Challenge of Creating an Informed Electorate.

Media Pioneer Drives Messages Home

By Ira Rifkin

Tony Schwartz jokingly calls ABC, NBC and CBS the new political parties. Invariably, the remark draws a chuckle. But Schwartz isn't kidding.

He's making a point about just how central the role of the media — particularly the electronic media — has become to the electoral process.

Shaking hands and kissing babies and getting out among the voters no longer means much to politicians. Today, says Schwartz, campaigns are won or lost in the living room, courtesy of the media. And he should know. He played a large part in shaping the current state of affairs.

"Tony Schwartz, as much as any person, laid the foundation for modern political advertising," says Sen. Warren Rudman (R-N.H.), one of hundreds of politicians for whom Schwartz has created ads over the past three decades. "I think he's one of the most brilliant, incisive people I've ever met."

Remember the "Daisy" TV spot that sank Barry Goldwater in 1964? The ad showed a little girl pulling the petals off a daisy, followed by an ominous voice counting down from 10 followed by a horrific nuclear explosion and Lyndon Johnson's voice speaking about the need to love one another to avoid nuclear war.

Schwartz created it.

Or the spot in which the only response to the question of what sort of president Spiro Agnew might make was a voice hysterical with laughter?

Schwartz created that one for the Humphrey-Muskie campaign, and, like "Daisy," it caused a stir. Both spots also illustrate the philosophy that underlies the Schwartz approach: Forget about trying to impart information about your candidate. Voters already have an opinion and have no experience of solutions anyway. Instead, create sensory impressions to evoke an emotional response.

On the Bandwagon

Use "presearch" — Schwartz is fond of coining words — to zero in on what voters are thinking, structure ads to connect to those concerns and leave the impression that your candidate also feels deeply about the problem and will do something about it when the time is right.

"We are in the business of using public relations in a new manner, not in the old terms of press relations," he says. "We are using PR as 'peoples' reaction,' personal retrieval of feelings and associations."

But Schwartz, a rather soft-spoken man with a teddy-bear-like persona, is far more than just a commercial-maker. He is also a fervent believer in grass-roots media activism.

The same media reality that is used to push presidential candidates and billion-dollar companies can be used by average citizens to get results where they live, he maintains. And if you use local radio — his favorite medium — it costs far less than you might imagine and can be far more effective than you think.

As an example, he points to a spot he created for the Center for Science in the Public Interest chiding McDonald's for frying its foods in fatty beef tallow rather than more healthful vegetable oil. He addressed it to "the chairman of the board at McDonald's," and broadcast it on the radio in Chicago where the corporation is headquartered.

The point was to "shame" the individual with the power to alter the situation into taking action. And it worked. "Shame is one of the most powerful means of social control," Schwartz says.

Media activism techniques like these are described in a Schwartz-produced video tape that elaborates his media philosophy: *Guerrilla Media: A Citizen's Guide to Using Electronic Media for Social Change* (see *Resources for Followup*, page 22, for order information). The techniques are usable by anyone with a little know-how, the will to use it and "a Radio Shack recorder," according to Schwartz. As he says: "Local air time is surprisingly cheap. The best thing about radio is that people were born without earlids. You can't close your ears to it."

Ira Rifkin is a Los Angeles free-lance writer.

Re: Action

The Three Stages of Advertising

Writing in *New York* magazine during the 1988 primary campaign, media experts Edwin Diamond and Stephen Bates, authors of *The Spot: The Rise of Political Advertising on Television*, pointed out that political advertising for each campaign follows a predictable three-stage cycle. Knowing the stages can help any viewer follow the fortunes of each candidate and avoid being manipulated by slick advertising techniques. Here's what to look for:

1. Bio ads help candidates put their best faces forward, as in 1988's common theme of "return to roots" and "the heartland." From Dukakis's stress on his immigrant background to spots featuring Robert Dole's Kansas hometown, candidates' introductory campaign ads emphasized their ties to the land and the common person.

2. Issues, policies and programs appear in the second stage, which helps the candidates demonstrate leadership and distance themselves from the pack. When candidates are in trouble, they're apt to start switching issues.

3. When candidates trail in the polls, they attack the opposition. The more financially strapped the campaign, the earlier the attacks.

MONEY, MEDIA AND 'ELECTABILITY'

Can women and minorities ever have a fair chance?

By Kathy Bonk

Q. *"Congresswoman Schroeder, why are you running as a woman?"*

A. *"I didn't think I had a choice."*

During the four months in the summer of 1987 that Pat Schroeder explored the possibility of running for president, the "woman question" was put to her repeatedly. Some reporters asked it directly, others tried to be a little more subtle. The undertones, however were always the same: "What do you really want? Are you running for vice president? Is this just a symbolic campaign? Is this just a movement effort? Are you positioning yourself for the Senate?"

Repeated answers of No! No! No! only satisfied a few in the media. Others tried to shape a Schroeder candidacy into a mold that didn't quite fit conventional wisdom.

Colorado Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder was not the first woman to run (or publicly think about running) for the presidency, just as Jesse Jackson was not the first black. In news reports describing the two campaigns, Shirley Chisholm, also a woman, was usually named in a backhanded compliment, the first black to run for the presidency, a so-called "symbolic" effort in 1972. Schroeder and Jackson were described as the candidates who have taken the next logical steps in the advancement of equality. But their candidacies are not seen as the real thing.

Any media consumer who takes a quick walk down a memory lane of press clips over the Schroeder four-month trial, Jackson's two tries and, to a lesser degree, the Ferraro vice presidency bid, would find media coverage full of sensationalism, along with a healthy dose of garden variety sexism and racism. My favorite was a rather serious page-one story on Schroeder in the *Christian Science Monitor* published in mid-June 1988. It included a strong headline and a terrific overview of where she stood on the issues, particularly on arms control and defense spending. But at the very bottom of page one, at the page break the trailer urged readers to: "Please see WOMAN page 6." The word WOMAN was all caps and bold as if that was the one word that best described the story. Had the piece been on Gephardt would it say, see MAN; or on Dukakis, would a copy writer dare try, see GREEK; or even Jackson, see BLACK?

> ***"Are you a serious candidate, or are you just running on the issues?"***
>
> **TV reporter questioning Citizen's Party 1980 presidential candidate Barry Commoner**

The most damaging aspect of Schroeder's media coverage, and the biggest hurdle for the next non-white, non-male candidate, was the implication that she was less than serious. It was the media's claim that she lacked seriousness, and their questioning of her "electability" that became the major themes that were constantly being woven into coverage. Soon larger and regular party donors were echoing these themes as the party line. "I think Pat should run. But I can't support her. I want to go with someone who can win," was heard frequently. At the same time, the media were promoting the Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs image. Ironically, the tagline left voters thinking the Democratic side was dull and boring, except for Schroeder.

Boys on the Bus

Trends in political media coverage don't just happen in a day or a week. There are

trend-setting reporters and then there are the followers. All the candidates fall victim to "pack" reporting. Gary Hart can cite his problems with the *Miami Herald*. George Bush with Dan Rather. In an early 1988 piece on campaign media, *The Washingtonian* listed the top 10 political reporters. All are white, all are male. Those on the list range in age from 35 to 60. Some are covering the presidential race for the first time, some are on their fourth national campaign. Two clearly are retiring, two others should.

These are the men who set the tone for presidential politics. Others around the country follow. Media coverage on any issue tends to be like the children's game, "Monkey See, Monkey Do." This is particularly true of political reporting. In each election, the traveling press corps starts out small. In the summer of 1987, maybe 40-60 reporters, nationwide, were filing regular stories on presidential politics. By the New Hampshire primary and Iowa caucuses, their number swelled into the thousands.

Many are the same reporters who either ignored Schroeder until the last week of September or who wrote off her candidacy in the first week of June. One reporter on the list wrote a column under the headline "A Woman Candidate?" Only a few days after the initial media coverage of Schroeder's "testing the waters," he wrote: "But because she is a woman, political professionals aware of her interest in the presidency see Schroeder's only natural base for a campaign as being that same movement — which may be precisely the wrong foundation for her campaign to be taken seriously."

Another reporter on the list started the "us vs. them" stories, citing every possible "special interest" type of candidate, except of course those representing the real special interests in Washington. He claimed: "Though none of them puts it so bluntly in public, some liberal feminist leaders think that if they (blacks) have their candidate (Jackson), why shouldn't we (women) have one of our own?" Isn't there room for white women to support Jackson or for blacks to support Schroeder?

Still another snag was the bias against a woman candidate who is a publicly declared feminist. Headlines read: "Pat Schroeder's problem is that she is a feminist." When Walter Mondale publicly declared himself a feminist, particularly before women's rights groups, it never provoked quite the same response.

And there was the husband problem. Coverage of Jim Schroeder ranging from "Mr. Mom" to "the corporate lawyer" could have spelled trouble. His law practice was dissected by every reporter requesting an interview. A clean bill of health from the *Legal Times* of Washington declared: "James Schroeder's Lobbying Shouldn't be Trouble." The accompanying article pointed out that "... floating over Rep. Schroeder is the political ghost of former Rep. Geraldine Ferraro." Thus, while other candidates' spouses were the focus of features on home and family, the one male spouse was the subject of "Ferraro Factor" articles.

Forget the Debates

On several occasions, Schroeder was excluded from key national debates. Her absence added to the problem of her perception as a "serious" candidate. PBS's *Firing Line*, the first nationally televised debate, blatantly rejected her request to appear. Limp excuses such as "we can't do the introduction video," or, "the stage won't accommodate another chair," came from producers. The *New York Post* headlined: "Scorned Woman Furious About All-Male Event."

There is no question that media coverage brings in money — the money needed to buy more media exposure.

Tom Wicker of *The New York Times*, wrote, "The strongest and saddest impression this viewer took away from the collective appearance of the Democratic presidential candidates on national television was that Snow White was missing, while the Seven Dwarfs prattled on."

A Qualified Woman

Had Patricia Schroeder been Patrick Schroeder, would media coverage have been different? Unlike Biden, Schroeder was a Phi Beta Kappa, with a key to prove it, and she graduated from Harvard Law School in one of the first classes to include women. Unlike others in the race, Schroeder came with 15 years of experience in the House Arms Services Committee. Many of the news articles didn't include her qualifications. Nor did they emphasize the issues on which she planned to run: family policy and burden sharing. Was she qualified to run and be elected? Clearly, yes. Was the media filing stories about qualifications and programs? No.

There is no question that media coverage brings in money, the money needed to buy more media exposure. Add to this vicious cycle the conventional wisdom about how a campaign should look and feel. The types of advisers, polls, focus groups and media spots all are and continue to be preconceived by political reporters who look to past campaigns for guidance.

In that sense, 1988 may be an important turning point, one that may make a Schroeder or Kirkpatrick presidential candidacy more viable in the future. The Jackson campaign showed the pundits that a candidate can challenge some of the traditions and conventional wisdom, and survive. Without pollsters and focus groups, and with very modest paid media, plus a lot of creativity and guts, Jackson took his campaign farther than any of the "ten best" would have predicted.

The dilemma for any woman or minority group member running for office will continue to be money, media and perceived electability. Financially, Schroeder fell far below the $2 million mark she set as a fundraising goal. Since she was not interested in a suicide mission, she dropped out. Had she run, it would have been to win, not just to make history. Over the next decade, thousands more non-incumbent women and minorities will run for office for federal, state and local slots. Only those races will answer the leading question: If the media are the carriers of the message, are women and minorities stalled from the start?

Kathy Bonk is co-director of the Communications Consortium. During 1987, she helped Patricia Schroeder explore the possibility of running for president.

POWER POLITICS:

Reporting the Real Issues

By Robert Manoff

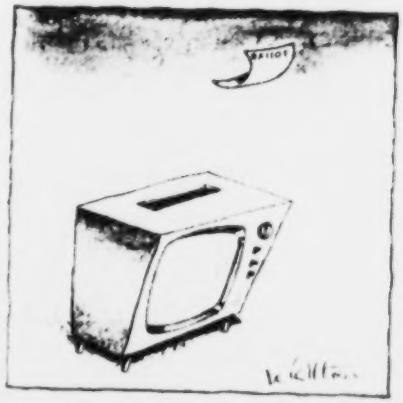
Distress over the state of political reporting has now become a regular feature of every presidential campaign season. Candidates blame the press for focusing on the "horse race" to the exclusion of "the real issues." Journalists blame the candidates for failing to talk about such issues or for obscuring their positions when they do. Privately, both the candidates and the press blame the situation on the public, which is said to have neither the patience nor — let's face it — the intelligence to care about what really matters. When it is all over, the pundits and the scholars assemble to rake over the entrails, speaking bromides into the wind.

After a couple of decades of such quadrennial self-scrutiny, however, we now have more than enough evidence to disabuse us of any notion that the media might change the way they report election campaigns. While there will always be exceptions, most campaign coverage will continue to pay far greater attention to the candidates' positions in the race than to their positions on the issues.

There are different ways to respond to this fact. We can regard it as a sign of serious defects in journalism, for example. This has been the view of those "perfectibilists" like myself who believe that democratic governance requires maximum public participation in policy debates about the future of the country. Aren't election campaigns the ideal moment to involve the public in such debates? we have always asked.

Well, no, it turns out. Not if we sweep away the democratic rhetoric and take a good look at the reality of the system. When we do so we discover, for example, that reporters report campaigns as horse races because that is the way politicians talk about them.

Here is Franklin Roosevelt speaking in



a recently rediscovered recording of a phone conversation about the strategy of his opponent in the 1940 campaign, Wendell Willkie. Willkie's manager will keep him well back until the campaign gets into the home stretch, Roosevelt says. "And my judgment is that they are going to start Willkie — pick him up, pick him up, pick him up — from the first of October on."

If we want to see another kind of reporting, we are first, as a people, going to have to create another kind of politics.

As they approach the final days, the plan, he says, is to convince the voters that "this fella still can win — he's got time to win. He can nose out the other horse."

Over the years, reporters have come to understand this spectacle. Like good sports writers reporting the public rituals of competition in their own domain, political reporters have come to appreciate that the purpose of campaigning is victory and that the important talk in the midst of any run for the White House is talk about winning.

There are "issues," of course, and modern campaigns have "issues staffs." But the ghettoization of those who traffic in substance amidst those who traffic in victory is already a sign that in campaigns there is no organic relation between the pursuit of ideas and the pursuit of success.

American politics, remember, is often celebrated as "non-ideological." As political entities, our parties, as we all know, are rump coalitions designed more for acquiring and exercising power than for advancing consistent national agendas.

When you come right down to it, in fact, that's what elections are all about, too. They are ritual contests by which power is transferred in our society. What we like to call "the issues" play a role, of course, but they are secondary to the real business at hand, which is winning. The voters, naturally, understand this very well and, despite the entreaties of the pundits who bemoan their inattention to the issues, the people do not take seriously what the candidates themselves — crafting positions that will serve them at the polls — treat with contempt.

That is why the demand that the press do a better job of reporting the issues is just an empty imperative. The press, you see, does a very good job of reporting what the elections are all about, which is the struggle for power. If we want to see another kind of reporting, we are first, as a people, going to have to create another kind of politics.

Robert Karl Manoff is the co-director of the Center for War, Peace and the News Media at New York University.

ONE JOURNALIST'S VIEW:

Informed voters must reach beyond images

By Cokie Roberts

A major complaint often heard about the coverage of any campaign is, "Why don't they cover the issues?" As a reporter, I would argue that we do, but our audience doesn't focus on them. Journalists covering any campaign will hear and report the same speech endlessly. The good ones will run issues pieces as well. But people tend to pay the most attention to personality stories, character confrontations and the final horse race. The process results in a constant search by reporters for the different and unusual — and often that proves to be not significant.

As a radio reporter and thus in a competing medium, I'm often asked whether I feel TV's political reporting is too visual. The answer is yes — but there's no way around it. A colleague told me about an event she covered during the 1980 Reagan campaign that featured fireworks in the middle of the day. She wondered what was going on until she saw that the fireworks turned into millions of tiny American flags. It was just a gorgeous picture.

Pictures form such a strong image in voters' minds that they've become a requirement for every candidate. No one will be able to say "Well, I just wasn't good on TV." They'll have to *get* good.

At times people do not really hear what is said on television — they *see* it. But no candidate can ignore television's role as the major source of news for most people. In one way this makes sense. The president has to use television to ask people to do the hard things — to pay higher taxes, to send their children to war. They will respond to a president who gives them a sense of confidence and inspires them. In the latter part of the 20th Century the medium for doing that is television.

I don't agree with analysts who complain that politics is becoming a spectator sport, with people staying at home to watch the result of other citizens' votes. People will turn out when they have something they want to vote for. Turnout on Super Tuesday this year, for example, was way up.

Our highest voter turnout was in the presidential balloting in 1960, a very close election. Voters cast their ballots at a lower rate both before and after. In my view the low voter turnout of the last 20 years is related to the baby boom's coming of age. Its members became voters just as the voting age was lowered to 18. We thus had this huge group of newly eligible youthful voters who weren't voting because they were younger than the age at which most people tend to vote.

In general, people who don't feel they have a stake in the process don't see the point of voting. Often nonvoters are from lower income, and less educated groups. In the past, they were also apt to be female. But today, women, who for a long time thought they couldn't make a difference, are turning out in huge numbers. In 1980, for the first time, there were as many women voting as men. The trend continued, and in 1986, nine million more women voted than men. If people are given the incentive and are really being organized to get to the polls, they will vote.

The key to making the public politically active is to make sure it's well-informed. Major newspapers and magazines, as well as radio and television, all provide a wealth of resources.

Put another way, we've had an explosion in information. No one can complain, "Oh, I wanted to know and there was no way of finding out." It's just that you might not be able to inform yourself completely by sitting in your living room and turning on the television set.

Cokie Roberts is a reporter for "All Things Considered" on National Public Radio.

Media&Values *editorial research intern Brian Levine assisted in the editing of this story.*

Democracy Requires Access to Media Alternatives

By Sharon Maeda

Regardless of the candidate/issue covered or the medium covering it, the 1988 presidential election represents journalism at its worst. Each television news broadcast appears to be campaigning as hard as the candidates for its share of the audience. Except for independent community stations, radio concentrates "all the news" in five-second bursts and rarely deals with substantive issues. The daily newspapers are all caught up in the headline/deadline syndrome. Although some magazines have managed intelligent discussion of election issues, most concentrate on pseudo-psychoanalytical personality pieces or rehashed strings of headlines disguised as in-depth reporting.

With the clichés and the criticisms magnified as never before, what is not being covered is a long list — real issues starting with war and peace, homelessness and unemployment, and ending with the rising drug crisis. Most of all, what we're not hearing about are the attitudes of the candidates themselves. How will they respond in times of crisis? Whom will they be likely to tap as key advisers? In what areas of policy are they most likely to be outstanding leaders or ineffective bureaucrats? In a year in which the First Lady's role in influencing policy is clearer than ever before, we're not even finding out how candidates' wives will influence them.

Despite this dismal record, I can point to some notable — and instructive — examples of quality election coverage. First, thanks to the combined absence of rigid formats and corporate ownership/sponsorship, or other control, community radio does the best job of letting the candidates speak for themselves.

Second, a variety of publications with more specialized audiences have shed some welcome light by focusing on specific aspects of the current presidential

campaign. For example, *Sojourners*, an independent Christian monthly, grappled with the much-greater-than-usual role religion played in shaping the 1988 election and its candidates. *Black Enterprise*, a monthly business magazine, interviewed candidates on issues of primary importance to both business and Afro-American community interests. (Interestingly, both George Bush and Jack Kemp declined to be interviewed.) There are other bright spots, but in order to get a sense of the candidates and the breadth of the issues a voter must read many publications throughout the campaign period.

How can the media be made more responsive? Deregulation and greater corporate ownership have all but ended public access to broadcasting, but listener/reader/viewer letters and calls can still help. So can support for various grass-roots and alternative media outlets. But the ownership and policies of the media organizations, the unwritten and sometimes unwitting self-censorship of journalists in the corporate media environment, and the lack of economic and human resources at the more enlightened media, make the task a very difficult one at best.

Election time or not, in the short run the best way of obtaining information lies in supporting the smaller, grassroots media through memberships, subscriptions, contributions, and volunteer work, and by sponsoring grants and fellowships for investigative journalism.

Ultimately, grass-roots support of alternative media is hardly enough. Over the long haul, election of a president willing to swim against the deregulatory tide and give control of the public airwaves back to the people would be a crucial step toward true media reform. People who care about the media need to consider the candidate they support as well as what they read, watch and hear.

"Alternative media will change in response to the political climate, help change that climate by their activist character and, having done so, change again. They are essential tools in the continuing task of reinventing America."

David Armstrong

Sharon Maeda is a principal of Spectra, Inc., a development/communications firm in Seattle, and former executive director of Pacifica Radio, the oldest noncommercial radio group in the U.S.

Liberate Candidates With Free TV

By Hazel Henderson

Right now you can't get elected unless you're rich enough to buy television time or are a former actor with movie-star good looks. It's simply appalling to think what we've done to limit our choices, particularly since it's totally unnecessary.

To remedy the situation, all we need to do is amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require free political air time for all candidates. If we did this, we would eliminate half the political corruption at one stroke and drastically open up the political process.

The United States is the only democracy in the world with this bizarre arrangement, which requires politicians to cross the palm of media executives with a lot of silver in order to reach the public over the public's own airwaves. In most other democracies, offering free air time to political candidates during election campaigns is a condition for holding a broadcasting license.

In Britain, where I grew up, political parties each put on a program. One week, you'll get a program put on by the Conservative party. The next week, Labour presents its views, followed by the Green Party and the Liberal Alliance and the SPD and so on.

Without these two-year marathons we go in for in the United States, we might actually have time to discuss the issues and decide where the country is going. And we might eliminate the 15-second spot, too. If it were up to me, it would be absolutely illegal for candidates to put 15 seconds on the air, selling themselves like soap.

Hazel Henderson is a well-known futurist and author of Creating Alternative Futures.

Whatever Happened to the Voter?

By Gordon Feller

The whole game of media politics has become a little like a hall of trick mirrors. We, the great unwashed who just watch TV and don't make it, look into the mirrors. What we see are professional watchers watching the media watch the politics. As they watch each other head into a spiral of mirrors watching mirrors, we all wonder aloud why no one knows where real substance can be found.

So now the media watch the campaigns; the campaigners point to the media and worry that the process is being distorted; the public watches this game being played between members of a mutual admiration society and has only one way to show its consternation: by stepping outside and leaving the game room altogether, despite the fact that both media and politicians claim service to "the citizenry" as their raison d'être. We, the voters, seem to be the only ones who haven't been invited to the game of media politics.

There are solutions to the spiraling cynicism the process engenders. While looking into the mirror of fabricated realities, the public needs to be reminded on a regular basis that authentically new political realities which touch our ordinary lives must be shaped by citizens, that the tools are there in the imagination, just as they were for our founders, and that no one has permission to stop us. If it means creating a parallel politics that allows us to withdraw energy and vitality from the spiraling mess, so be it. The only way to immunize against the political illusion and to ward off the profound disillusionment we see in the eyes of an alienated electorate is to remember that in the "deep tissue" of the body politic resides a politics profoundly responsive to our real needs as human beings.

Neither the electronic church nor electronic politics will deliver us to that New Jerusalem — only citizens working in community creating a shared set of values each day through the politics of interaction can do that for us. In such a world television can be an ally.

Gordon Feller of San Rafael, California, consults on media strategy and on public engagement for candidates, elected officials, corporations and not-for-profit organizations.

Of Money and Politics:

SENATORS COUNT THE COST

Ted Stevens: Disagreements Block Campaign Reform

Most political observers agree that there is a need for campaign finance reform. With 60 percent of congressional campaign budgets going for print, radio and television advertisements, the media costs of political campaigns are clearly too high.

Unfortunately, for the better part of three months in mid-1987, and again early in 1988, the U.S. Senate failed to resolve major disagreements on a campaign finance bill that would have contained the cost of senatorial campaigns.

As the author of one of the alternate proposals considered during this legislative session, I am most aware of the conflicts involved.

There is agreement that spending on congressional races should be brought under control. But disagreement exists on how to lower those costs.

The two national parties, incumbents and challengers, the media and interest groups all have their own ideas about the issues involved. For most, the question is how to lower the costs of campaigning without diminishing candidates' ability to get their messages across to the voters.

For example, as an Alaska legislator, I had serious problems with S. 2, the campaign finance reform bill finally debated by the Senate. Because it set state-by-state spending limits for senatorial campaigns, it would have given Alaska and Rhode Island senatorial candidates the same spending limits for their campaigns. Unfortunately, this seeming equity ignores the vast distances that have to be covered in Alaska campaigning. I travel more miles *within* Alaska than most senators travel between home and Washington.

There were other flaws in S. 2, from my perspective. The measure failed to recognize the varying costs of buying advertising in different markets. Additionally, S. 2's spending limits would have increased the incumbent's inherent advantage. But by far the greatest flaw in S. 2 was its financing plan, which would have transferred to the American taxpayer the burden of financing Senate races.

My proposal, S. 1326, would have avoided some of those problems. By requiring the disclosure of "soft money" expenditures that go unreported under current law, and placing further restrictions on contributions from political action committees, my bill was intended to limit the cost of modern campaigning without setting up a new system for financing Senate campaigns.

Most senators don't have 586,000 square miles to cover during a campaign. And most don't have 10 hours' flying time between their home state and Washington, D.C. But many senators had concerns about the effect of S. 2 on campaigning in their regions. Many senators are opposed to shifting greater campaign costs to taxpayers.

The movement for campaign finance reform will continue as financial pressure on parties and candidates increases. I believe the movement will be successful eventually — but not until the various interested parties come to some agreement about which direction it should take.

Sen. Ted Stevens, a Republican, is the senior senator from Alaska.

Alan Cranston: Fund Raising Consumes Candidates' Time

Whenever I'm asked to name the most important changes I've seen during my 36 years of active politics, I unhesitantly reply: television and money.

My successful 1986 California Senate race — the most expensive anywhere, ever — is a good example. I spent more than $13 million, most of it for TV spots and the fund raising to pay for them. Yet I was outspent by my opponent, who paid $15 million for similar services.

Of course, money has always been important in campaigning for pubic office. When a fellow Californian called money "the mother's milk of politics," he was making an obvious, if astute, observation. But the expense has increased exponentially with the scale of modern pottics.

Except in smaller states like Iowa and New Hampshire or campaigns centered around limited special issues, personal campaigning is more and more a thing of the past. In California, with its 28 million inhabitants, it would take me 33 years just to shake the hands of all our registered voters, even if I neglected my Senate duties and devoted every day of every year to the task.

But the extensive use of television has increased the cost of campaigning by a quantum leap. The cost of air time and production of high quality spots are inordinately expensive, and California's five major media markets add a great deal to the bill.

To meet these massive expenses, the statewide or national candidate must spend a vast amount of time raising money, even at the cost of discussion of the issues and spending time meeting with small groups of voters.

The many proposals for reforming media politics pale with the indispensable — but still elusive — task of limiting campaign spending.

One day we may have a breakthrough. I hope the results of this November's elections will help.

Senator Alan Cranston, a Democrat, is the senior senator from California.

PRESS CONFERENCES:
Linking People With Their President

By Norman Cousins

The recent spate of books on the Reagan presidency in the words of a former White House occupant, has made one thing perfectly clear: Modern politicians excel in using media to display their programs and sell their ideologies.

Unfortunately, the media's misuse as a public relations tool represents a major flaw in our informational system. In fact, if I were going to presume to offer the president advice it would be this: Never forget that the president's most important role is to educate the American people about their needs and how best to meet them.

Surely no politician in the world has as much access to the media as the president of the United States. No other officeholder is under as much scrutiny. Despite — or perhaps because of — this glare of publicity, some modern presidents have learned to use the media spotlight to conceal rather than reveal. The metamorphosis of the press conference into a public relations event is a perfect example.

The presidential press conference has the potential to be a master classroom for educating the American people. At the very least it should be an honest forum for presenting news developments and presidential policies. Instead, it has become a pitfall for press aides and media specialists, to be avoided if possible on the principle that open communication holds too many risks. When media criticism, public comment or the flow of events make a press conference expedient, the president's staff seems determined to turn it into a favorable media event.

The presidential press conference has the potential to be a master classroom for educating the American people.

Because they are so carefully managed, press conferences drastically limit genuine two-way flow of information. Who may attend them, which reporters are called upon to ask questions, and what is discussed are all very carefully scripted beforehand. In order to make them a real source of news and ideas, the whole concept of the press conference needs to be rethought.

It could provide a magnificent opportunity for speaking and listening by the president, the press, and, through them, the people. In order to maximize this opportunity, times for holding press conferences should be regularly established. They should always be televised during prime-time hours. Rules for questioning should be liberalized and a real effort should be made to include reporters from a wide variety of publications.

Participation of ordinary citizens could broaden the process even further. During each session, individuals from various regions and groups would have an opportunity to discuss the issues that they're concerned about. Representatives from such groups as the Association of College Newspaper Editors, the Scholastic Press Association (high school editors), and the League of Women Voters could meet with the president either in person or through telephone hookups.

Such sessions could be a crucial first step toward education of the public. In a nation as large and complex as ours, no effort should be spared to link citizens with their primary public servant. The finest teachers are skilled communicators.

Proper communication is one of the most difficult undertakings on earth. The older I get, the more I am forced to recognize that many or even most failures and breakdowns have their origin in faulty communication. Whether we are talking about the predicaments of human beings or the confrontations of nations, the inability of people to convey intentions and meaning has been one of the prime causes of confusion and violence over the centuries.

Norman Cousins is a writer and former editor of Saturday Review. *He is currently a professor on the medical faculty of the University of California/ Los Angeles.*

Media&Values *editorial research intern Barbie White assisted in the editing of this story.*

Local Groups Can Raise Level of Media Debate

By Katherine Ragsdale

It was a typical morning. The network news show that helps me wake up featured an election analysis. It seems Bush was still struggling to overcome an appearance of wimpiness, and Democrats were wondering whether Dukakis was too dull to capture the hearts (and minds?) of the electorate. The radio station that keeps me company on the slow drive to work included a campaign advertisement. A candidate in some local race told us that he loves this area. His wife and their three teenage sons also love this area. He (and they) would like us to vote for him so that he can work to keep this a great place to live.

It was mornings like this that led to the development of IMPACT '88, a project of National IMPACT designed to help raise peace and justice issues in the '88 congressional elections. National IMPACT is an interfaith public-policy network, whose members were simply tired of issue-less, platform-less campaigns. They wanted to get the candidates on record on some of the substantive issues and then make sure that the voting public knew where the candidates and the faith community stood on those issues.

The problem has two dimensions, each feeding the other and each illustrated in the scenario with which this article opened:

First, candidates are relying increasingly on 30-second spots and negative advertising. If the local radio ad cited is typical, we are supposed to vote for the candidate because he has a nice family and he really wants the job. Nothing even slightly resembling an issue was mentioned.

Second, the media tend to ignore issues in favor of flashy stories focusing on personality rather than substance. While both Bush and Dukakis have stated positions and records on a variety of issues, many of the election analyses focus instead on wimpiness and dullness factors.

Those who wish to raise the level of the debate must deal with both of those dynamics. To see to it that candidates for Congress and for state and local office address the issues, IMPACT '88 urges the formation of local interfaith committees that will send out candidate questionnaires, interview candidates and sponsor candidate forums. The candidates' voting records also provide information about their positions on various issues.

Making all this information available to the voting public is the tricky part of the project. If the media consider the candidates' positions newsworthy, there is no problem. If, however, simply getting the candidates on record is not enough to get their records in print, a couple of options are still available.

1) It may be possible for the group raising the issues to create news. If "Candidate X Supports/Opposes Contra Aid" is not considered newsworthy, then perhaps "Churches and Synagogues Join to Question Candidates on Central American Policy" would be. Or how about, "1,000 Turn Out as Interfaith Community Sponsors Debate on Welfare Reform"? The project itself becomes the news and, thus, the vehicle through which the issues are raised.

2) It may be that there is no way to get the media to cover the important issues adequately, particularly in small, local races. In that case, it's time to find other media. Having gathered information about the candidates' positions, the group could publicize that information itself. The faith community has its own large audience each week. Congregational newsletters, service-bulletin inserts, adult-education forums, tract racks, community meetings, etc., are all effective communications media.

People who believe that Scripture mandates working toward a just and peaceful world must take their electoral responsibilities seriously. We can't vote responsibly (or expect others to do so) if we are not adequately informed. The broadcast and print media are extremely useful tools, but they're not the only ones available. If the media are not fulfilling their duty to keep us informed, then we become responsible for informing ourselves and others. It is not a responsibility we are free to abdicate.

"Our entire democratic process is predicated upon the assumption that people who have a special interest can make their voices heard. If we don't speak out, we undermine the whole system."

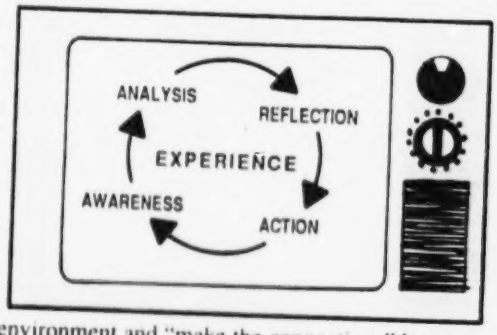
Katherine Ragsdale

Katherine Hancock Ragsdale, M. Div., is project director of IMPACT '88. Information about the project can be obtained by calling or writing: IMPACT '88, 100 Maryland Ave. NE, Washington, D.C. 20002; (202)544-8636.

REFLECTION/ACTION

Tools to build media awareness for groups, classes, families

HOW TO BUILD MEDIA AWARENESS



Media&Values is more than a magazine. It's a tool, a catalyst, for leading you — or helping you to lead others — from awareness to action on the many issues raised by today's mass media and new technology.

Whether you're a teacher, counselor, youth worker, religious leader, or just an active media watcher of any age, the ideas and activities on the following pages can help you examine your media environment and "make the connections" between what we hear, read and watch and our everyday lives.

Many people ask if anything can really be done about issues like sexual violence in the media, bias in the news or advertising to children. Yes, of course! But because the mass media system is only one aspect of our very complex social structure — with economic, political and cultural ramifications — change comes slowly.

Thus there are no easy answers, or quick-fix solutions. Perhaps, indeed, what is most important is learning to question, to be suspicious, to challenge what we see and hear and to test it against our experience.

That's where *Media&Values* can help.

Using a framework created by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, each issue of *Media&Values* takes the reader — individually or as part of a group — through a four-step process of media awareness/analysis/reflection/action. Note how the magazine is put together:

- The first article raises our awareness of the theme topic and what some of the major questions are.
- Further articles develop political, economic, social, cultural or historical background to help you analyze the topic. A list of resources provides direction for deeper exploration.
- Next, *Media&Values* columnists provide thoughtful reflection and suggestions for positive action for different groups and audiences in society. Additional *Re:Action* boxes provide practical program tips for classroom or group discussions.
- Finally, the last page focuses on one group that has "gotten involved" in the issue and whose actions can provide a model for others.

Whether a group is two people over breakfast, a dozen children in kindergarten, a college seminar class, or eight individuals in a church study group, we all have media experiences to share! Stimulated by the articles and ideas in *Media&Values* we can reflect on these experiences and gain deeper insight into how we use the media, how the media uses us and what steps we can take, individually or as a society, to keep our media values in a healthy perspective.

WOMEN

First Ladies Convey Today's Feminine Independence

By Sally Steenland

For centuries, the media's most-asked question about a president's wife was "What did she wear?"

From Eleanor Roosevelt's socially-conscious globetrotting to Betty Ford's candor about her addictions, the role of First Lady gradually expanded to include deeds as well as appearance. But throughout the '70s and '80s, expectations of the presidential wife have remained largely symbolic. Whoever she was, she existed to humanize the candidate and to reassure us regular folk that our president faced the same domestic joys and messes as the rest of us.

The days of the reassuring symbolic wife are ending with the candidacy of younger men whose wives have careers and reputations of their own. Once today's standard dual-career family percolates up to the White House, we may face the extraordinary as usual. We could have a First Lady who leaves 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue every morning to work in an office, entertains her own professional associates at the White House, and perhaps travels on business and misses state dinners. We might even have a First Lady whose public stands on important policy matters are different from her husband's.

And if that doesn't seem so strange, what will happen when the president herself is female? What kind of coverage results when President Patricia Schroeder and Soviet Leader Mikhail Gorbachev negotiate an arms reduction while Ms.

"Those who rely on television for following politics are more confused and more cynical than those who do not. And those who rely totally on television are the most confused and cynical of all."

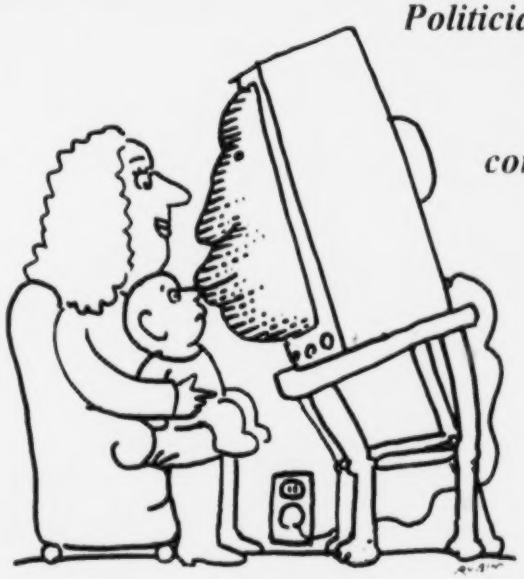
Michael Robinson

Gorbachev and Mr. Schroeder are paired together visiting an art museum? When the genders are reversed, we see things differently.

Recognition of this historic role and upcoming changes in it prompt an exercise to try during the 1988 campaign. When wives are speaking on their husband's behalf, notice how much of what they say is image and how much is substance. Ask yourself if a husband could or would say the same words or play the same role. Pay attention to media coverage of these women's words. Does it probe what they feel and think, or simply regard them as shadows of their husbands?

Even the White House is not immune to the changing circumstances of women's lives. As the wives of today's candidates begin to carve out a more separate, yet still supportive stance, their new interests will be reflected by the media. The new symbols they create will reflect accurately the reality of all our lives.

Sally Steenland is the media director of the National Commission on Working Women of Wider Opportunities for Women.



Politicians have long believed that face-to-face contact between politicians and voters is by far the most effective way to campaign.

CHILDREN

TV Tool Teaches Election Basics

By Judith Myers-Walls

Media coverage of the 1988 election will present many new experiences and images for young children. The first reaction of most, however, may be to turn off the television because "there's nothing on."

Parents who take the time to help their children tune in on the election will realize that, for once, ordinary coverage is an excellent teaching tool. Campaign ads, convention coverage and debates all provide excellent opportunities for involving youngsters in the election experience and educating them about how the political process works.

Talk with young children about what it means to vote. Hold an election to decide the dinner menu, with family members arguing for one choice or another. Many other decisions, from video selections to allocation of chores, can be put to a vote, with parents drawing parallels between family decisions and national elections.

E.B. White's classic, *Stuart Little*, in which Stuart pretends he is King of the World, can be used to explore the concept of leadership. Have each child pretend he or she is "Ruler of the World." Discuss the rules they make up in light of actual lawmaking and leadership concepts.

Once children understand the idea of elections, they're ready to learn about media coverage. Even young children can distinguish between rival political ads, absorb the drama of debates and appreciate the turmoil on the convention floor. They may enjoy learning to recognize frequent players, like news commentators and candidates, and symbols like the White House, the Democratic donkey and the Republican elephant.

The slightly older child who knows the basics is ready for parental comments on the techniques of individual ads, comments on candidate messages and explanations for speeches and specials.

Children look forward to adult privileges such as learning to drive. With the help of media election coverage, they can learn to be excited about voting as well. And while they learn to be good citizens, they can also become aware consumers of media. With television so important to today's political process, it's never too early to learn that they go together.

Judith A. Myers-Walls is associate professor of child development at Purdue University in Lafayette, Indiana.

"When George Washington wrote his famous farewell address, he included a paragraph complaining about treatment from the media. It was edited out upon advice from George Hamilton."

James David Barber

PASTORING

Faith Can Counter Campaign Cynicism

By Rev. Peter Paulsen

At the end of the movie *The Candidate* the victorious contender, played by Robert Redford, emerges from a room in his headquarters hotel, turns to his crafty campaign manager and asks, "What do I do now?" I think there's a lot of truth in that line.

Very few people run for political office in order to deceive the public. Our collective experience confirms that most officeholders are hard workers for the common good.

Modern campaigns don't measure this desire to be of service, however. Instead, they emphasize packaging candidates to maximize voter identification. Complex issues must be telescoped into the 30-second sound bites designed to resonate with voters' hopes and fears.

It's hardly surprising, then, that a candidate who has been pushed and shoved and molded into a marketable commodity would lose touch with self. After the election, the winner faces an even greater challenge: honoring the content and process of a mediated campaign while recapturing the ideas and aspirations that first inspired the run for office.

The religious community has a vital pastoral concern in this area. It must work to provide candidates with an opportunity to stay in touch with themselves. This could be something as simple as a letter congratulating a candidate for a courageous stand, or as complex as a community forum designed to explore issues in their full multiplicity.

Religious organizations can also play an important role in interpreting the dynamics of campaigning and the subtle meanings and implications of election rhetoric. Most of all, they can help their members resist the temptation to demand simplistic solutions to many-sided controversies.

Separation between the voter and the candidate in modern campaigns tends to engender cynicism. The candidate becomes a commodity and the voter a cog in a meaningless machine. Faith has always countered cynicism and won. By bringing candidate and voter together, faith has the potential to beat cynicism once again, bringing new hope to elected officials and the electorate alike.

A former media consultant, Peter Paulsen is a pastor and program executive in the Reformed Church in America.

MINORITIES

TV Images Reflect Changing America

By Carlos Cortés

Television has given a new, visual dimension to the ever-present racial subtext that runs like a thread through much of American politics. Although race has certainly been a sometimes unstated political issue throughout U.S. history, the tube has added a new dimension, constantly and inevitably reminding us of race without uttering a word. The unexpected success of Jesse Jackson with primary voters has brought this visual dimension into the open.

As a candidate, Jackson made many choices during his presidential campaign. But he was denied one option, the choice not to look black.

Richard Gephardt could darken his eyebrows for TV (which he reportedly did). Michael Dukakis could use tweezers to lighten his. But Jackson, even if he had wanted to, could not change the color of his skin.

Every time Jackson stands in front of a camera, his presence sends a clear message of his racial identity. During his campaign those same cameras proclaimed a clear message: a black man is running for the presidency.

Like Geraldine Ferraro's femaleness in 1984, Jackson's blackness has become a major campaign image. For the moment, it increases the significance of race as a campaign issue, whether discussed openly or ignored.

As the first serious black candidate, Jackson joins the limited company of modern pioneers whose presence on television reminds us how much our society has changed — and how far we still have to go.

As a white ethnic, John F. Kennedy, the first Irish Roman Catholic president, was able to use television as a positive factor in his own campaign to break a political taboo. A decade later, the central role of Sen. Daniel Inouye of Hawaii in the televised Watergate hearings reminded voters of the prominent position a Japanese-American had attained in the U.S. Senate. In the same way on the regional level, the appearance of San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros on Texas newscasts helps to remind voters of a future in which Hispanics will play a greater leadership role.

Of course, the racial background of these political figures, as well as Jackson, would not be a secret without television. But their presence in our living rooms tends to emphasize their backgrounds in a way that John Kennedy's — or Michael Dukakis's — does not.

By imposing its message in visual terms on literate and illiterate viewers alike, television has driven home the message that increased participation of all groups in American politics is on the rise. By merely watching television we can see America changing. And the picture we see is of a future in which more and more Americans — whatever their last names or the color of their skin — will be able to play their part.

Carlos Cortés is professor of history at the University of California/Riverside. He is currently writing a book on ethnic images in the American feature film.

"The media doesn't love a president or a politician. The media loves a story. And there's no story in being for somebody. The story is in being against somebody."

Richard Nixon

GLOBAL SCENE

Voters Still Seeking Leadership, Vision

By Keval Joseph Kumar

As a first-time observer of the American elections during the 1988 primaries, I was fascinated by the role of the media. Even in tiny Iowa and New Hampshire, candidates played to a national audience. The planning, stamina and financial investment required by a years-long media-savvy presidential campaign were truly amazing.

Based on my experience with British, European and Indian media, the rest of the world is very different. To begin with, the media in many Asian and African countries may reach only part of the population. And their government-owned and government-run stations may lack credibility with those who can afford radio and television sets.

Most of all, however, media influence is limited in these ancient cultures by the need for what Indians call a "darshan," or a sacred sight or vision of the candidate for leadership. No television or cinematic image can substitute for this mode of interpersonal communication. The unexpected success of the Jesse Jackson campaign demonstrates the power of this form of communication, whatever influence may be credited to the mass media.

In media-saturated Europe, major political parties can look for wide and balanced news coverage. But here, too, the media are not thought to be very decisive influences on most general elections. Direct media access is limited to "equal time" slots offered free to all parties. Paid political advertising is not allowed in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, West Germany, Scandinavia and other countries that stress television quality over commercialism. Public meetings and door-to-door campaigning tend to be widely popular and effective.

Much recent political communications research has focused on the effect of electronic media on elections. In my view, the role of a charismatic leader in interpersonal situations needs to be examined more closely. The electronic media are powerful political influences in a world of increasing populations and far-flung distances. But they are only channels for charisma, not charisma itself. The "darshan" of our prospective leaders is still crucial to our sense of leadership.

Keval Joseph Kumar is a staff member of the Centre for the Study of Communication and Culture in London.

FAMILY LIFE

Standing Up For Ideas and Dreams

By Helen H. Graham

From FDR's fireside chats to glitzy '80s TV documentaries, politicians have been quick to recognize the power of media. Like product ads, today's political spots are designed to engage our inner emotions, using images and symbols to connect with our fears and desires.

The most effective political ads don't create new images, but instead capitalize on moods, beliefs and prejudices already held by listeners and watchers. TV ads, especially, base much of their effectiveness on viewers' habits of believing what they see.

These days, the use of the media doesn't end there. As an Atlanta resident, I had a ringside seat in planning for the 1988 Democratic Convention. We've come a long way from the smoke-filled room.

In a colorful extravaganza, its impresarios, Emmy-winning musical variety show producers Smith & Hemion, concocted showmanship designed to hammer home the party's message, woo independent voters and stymie would-be channel changers. A $250,000 satellite feed was set to make sure no local stations missed the action.

How can we adjust to a circus and magic act in the living room? How can the American family separate the American dream of liberty and justice for all from TV illusion? It's not an easy task. But it is possible to establish guidelines for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of candidates and extracting political goals and ideals from the razzle-dazzle of

Re Action

Decoding The Images

Politicians are generally delivered to us through the images of the media. To help you as an individual political campaign watcher or as an activity for a group in your church or synagogue, conduct an analysis of your values versus those of the political candidates, whether on the national, state, or local level. Compile two lists:

1. **Attributes that you see in politicians according to their media images. For example:**

   acting as a father figure — representing old guard values — riding on the coattails of the president — projecting the image of a family man (woman) — conveying the potential for decisive leadership, etc.

2. **Now compile your personal list indicating which of the values conveyed in the media images you endorse and which ones you disapprove of. Add to the list any other values which you believe a politician should realistically offer. Compare the two lists.**

3. **Repeat the activity for candidates on different levels of government or use it to compare the several candidates for one political office.**

"The problem is not that there is too much entertainment but that public discourse and cultural activities are increasingly forced to adopt the guise of entertainment."

Roelf Haan

campaign sleight-of-hand.

Start by making a checklist of each candidate's stand on social and ethical issues. How do they relate to the family's — and the nation's — deeper needs? To the emerging global consciousness? How has television given expression to new ideas and energies?

Ask yourself if advertising and television coverage present a different picture than radio or print media. What issues do television or other media ignore? Where can we find better information on political candidates? Stage a home debate to focus on these issues. Family members could each select a candidate, gather information and defend their choices at a family forum.

This kind of discussion provides an outlet for constructive disagreement on candidates and political issues. Conflict always involves risk, but political divergence need not be painful. Families need to realize that they won't always agree. But they can agree to differ — and to make media a healthy part of the process of trying out ideas and standing up for one's visions.

Helen Hallum Graham is vice president of programs for CEO Executive Forum, Inc., in Atlanta, Georgia, as well as a communications consultant and multimedia producer. She is married and the mother of seven.

YOUTH

Training Creates Media Wise Voters

By Bill Wolfe

After eight years in office, Ronald Reagan is the only president preteens can remember. And even older teenagers have shaped their idea of the presidency around his telegenic image and relaxed media style.

Thus the post-Reagan era that will begin after the fall elections presents a particular challenge to youth. For most, it will be the first opportunity they've had to define this national office in a new way. And as prospective voters, with the crucial 18-year-old eligibility date around the corner, their ability to distinguish between image and substance and make intelligent decisions based on media portrayals is particularly important.

Youthful perspectives on leadership go beyond the ballot box, however. Their views of community, church and school leadership — even the leadership qualities they see in themselves — all are affected.

That's why young people need help in untangling political fact from media fiction. More influenced by image than any other age group, youthful TV viewers have less experience with politics. Evaluating political ads, debates and speeches is a skill they have yet to acquire, but it can be learned.

It's helpful to begin a discussion of image vs. substance with the images themselves. Replay of a variety of video-recorded political images can start the discussion.

The tape used should be balanced, with statements and messages for and against competing candidates. Invite your group to view it as an impartial jury interested in a true picture of the political process.

After viewing, ask your group to describe positive and negative images about each candidate. Include often-repeated slogans and ads and explore their meanings. What audiences or interests are these messages attempting to reach?

On a second sheet ask participants to note documentation or other supporting data for facts and statements made in ads or speeches. Group members can complete their pictures by marking the images that include no documentation. Use a third sheet to list national issues that all candidates failed to address.

Comparing images, facts and unaddressed issues can lead to a more illuminating discussion than any featured in the campaign. Of course, this view of the political/media connections is only the beginning of learning about politics. But such a discussion and other programs like it can be a crucial step in helping young people match candidates with the ideals they want to affirm.

Bill Wolfe is director of senior high educational ministries, Board of Discipleship, United Methodist Church, Nashville, Tennessee.

Spotting The Spots

I don't buy the argument that political spots undermine democracy. In a way they serve democracy by reaching more people in a single instant than a whistle-stop campaign ever could or a speech or a stump. When William Jennings Bryan was running for president, his speeches sometimes lasted three hours. Imagine him trying that on a television audience that's come to expect fast, fast, fast relief.

One thing to be said for political spots is that they enable political candidates to choose their message on their terms. The politician is not left to the mercy of newspaper editors or television producers, looking for that ten second excerpt that fits the reporter's script. The fact is, candidates can say a lot in thirty seconds that a voter should know about them or their opponent. And I'm not worried that they'll carry the day. No spot has the last word. We have news reports, the opposition's campaign, other publications, and our own common sense against which to measure its claims.

— Bill Moyers

WATCH, READ, LISTEN

Resources for Follow-up

IN PRINT

• ***Channels of Power: The Impact of Television on American Politics*** by Austin Ranney discusses the past, present and future effects of television on American government. Basic Books, Inc., Publishers (1983), Route 3, Box 20-B, Hagerstown, MD 21740, (800)638-3030, $9.95.

• Written by political media consultant and former CBS president J. Leonard Reinsch, ***Getting Elected: From Radio and Roosevelt to Television and Reagan*** takes an anecdotal look at the relationship between broadcast media and politics. Hippocrene Books, Inc. (1988), 171 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016, (212)685-4372, $18.95.

• ***The Great American Video Game*** by Martin Schram investigates how decisions made behind the scenes in campaign headquarters and newsrooms during the 1984 elections shaped the image of the political candidates. William Morrow & Co., Inc. (1987), 105 Madison Ave., New York, NY, 10016, (212)889-3050, $17.95.

• ***John F. Kennedy and the Media: The First Television President,*** by Joseph P. Berry, Jr., describes how President Kennedy managed and manipulated the media. University Press of America, Inc. (1987), 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, MD 20706, (301)459-3366, $11.75.

• ***The Mass Media Election: How Americans Choose Their President,*** written by Thomas E. Patterson, is based on a study conducted during the 1976 presidential election that researched the relationship between election coverage and the American voter. Praeger Publishers (1980), 1 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10010, (212)685-5300, $15.95.

• In his book ***"Bullshit!": The Media As Power Brokers in Presidential Elections,*** journalist Jeffrey Gale has compiled interviews, speeches, articles, and political documents to show how the national news media can make or break political parties and candidates. Bold Hawk Press (1988), P.O. Box 588, Palm Springs, CA 92263, (619)325-4435, $9.95.

• In ***Media Power Politics*** David L. Paletz and Robert M. Entman explores the sometimes unintentional influence that television, newspapers and news magazines have on public opinion and power in America. Free Press (1981), Macmillan Publishing Co., Front and Brown Streets, Riverside, NJ 08075, (800)257-5755, $14.95.

• In her book, ***Packaging the Presidency: A History and Criticism of Presidential Campaign Advertising,*** Kathleen Hall Jamieson analyzes the advertising techniques used in each campaign from 1952 through 1980. Oxford Univ. Press (1984), 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016, (212)679-7300, $19.95.

• In ***Parties and Elections in Corporate America,*** radical political scientist Howard L. Reiter describes why he feels that the American political system is not suited to our needs and discusses other systems that might work better. St. Martin's Press, Inc. (1986), 175 5th Ave., New York, NY 10010, (212)674-5151, $21.35.

• ***The People, the Press and Politics*** by Norman Ornstein, Andrew Kohut and Larry McCarthy is a compilation of statistics based on an exhaustive study sponsored by the Times Mirror corporation, publishers of the Los Angeles *Times*. The study looks at the American electorate and suggests that much of the conventional wisdom about American politics must now be discarded. Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc. (1988), Jacob W Reading, MA 01867, (617)944-37($10.95.

A free 23-page executive summary the study is obtainable by calling (213)23 3946 or writing Donald Kellerman, Pu lic Affairs, Times Mirror, Times Mirr Square, Los Angeles, CA 90053.

• ***Politics and Television Re-Viewed,*** l Gladys Engel Lang and Kurt Lang, i vestigates television's influence on p litical events. Sage Publications, In (1984), 2111 W. Hillcrest Dr., Newbur Park, CA 91320, (805)499-0721, $14.

• Authors Edwin Diamond and Stephe Bates look at the historical use and impac of political spots in their book ***The Spot The Rise of Political Advertising o Television.*** MIT Press (1988), 55 Hay ward St., Cambridge, MA 02142, (617)253-2884, $10.95.

• ***Teledemocracy: Can Technology Protect Democracy?*** by F. Christopher Arterton discusses the possibilities and implications of expanded use of the media as a means for protecting and expanding democracy. Sage Publications, Inc. (1987), 2111 W. Hillcrest Dr., Newbury Park, CA 91320, (805)499-0721, $16.95.

• ***Television and the Presidential Elections: Self-Interest and the Public Interest,*** edited by Martin Linsky, is a documentation of a 1982 conference attended by representatives from six television networks that focused on the networks' policies and practices on election coverage. Lexington Books/D.C. Heath and Company (1983), 125 Spring St., Lexington, MA 02173, (617)862-6650, $12.95.

ORGANIZATIONS

• ***Choosing Our Future*** works to revitalize citizen participation in democracy through development of Electronic Town Meetings. Choosing Our Future, 109 Gilbert Ave., P. O. Box 820, Menlo Park,

CA 94026, (415)853-0600.

• ***IMPACT '88***, a project of National IMPACT, encourages churches and synagogues to become involved in elections by raising their voices about the issues that concern them (see article on page 16). IMPACT '88, 100 Maryland Ave., NE, Washington, D.C. 20002, (202)544-8636.

• A nonprofit, nonpartisan public policy institute, the ***Roosevelt Center for American Policy Studies*** strives to clarify policy choices before the nation and facilitate public involvement in all levels of the decision-making process. 316 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20003, (202)547-7227.

SIGHT/SOUND

• ***General Election***, part of a three-part series titled *Campaigning on Cue*, uses excerpts from a post-election conference at the University of Chicago to consider the effect of television on the 1984 presidential campaign. Media professionals and scholars, as well as the 1984 campaign managers for both Reagan and Mondale were among the participants. Films, Inc., 5547 N. Ravenswood Ave., Chicago, IL 60640-1199, (800)323-4222. Purchase: $198.00.

• In ***Guerilla Media***, media philosopher Tony Schwartz shows ordinary consumers how to gain access to media in order to air their views and change society. Varied Directions, Inc., 69 Elm St., Camden, ME 04843, (207)236-8506. Purchase: $299.00.

• ***The State of the Fourth Estate*** is a series of audiotapes on the media and politics that includes "Managing the Propaganda War: The Defense Establishment and the Media" and "Contragate and the U.S. Press: Marc Cooper." Available from Pacifica Radio Archive, 5316 Venice Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90019, (213)931-1625. Prices range from $11 to $35.

MEDIA WATCH
With an Eye to Values

● Since 1980, the cost of running a campaign has doubled — and that means big bucks for broadcasters, to the tune of $485,000 during an election year for the average television station. In fact, according to *Channels* magazine, "the three-way fight among network affiliates, independent stations and cable TV for the political advertising dollar" figures to be as fierce as the battle between candidates — at least until and unless campaign reform measures find some legislative formula for keeping costs under control.

● In 1984 and 1988 new media brought old messages to new voters. The innovations included use of cable television to reach those most recently enfranchised and least likely to vote. MTV broadcasts included public service announcements featuring such rock stars as Crosby, Stills and Nash, Tina Turner and Cyndi Lauper. When Lauper asked "Are your shoes too tight? Are your feet too small?" she wasn't selling shoes, she was urging that "the answer to this and many other problems is to register and vote."

● What does it cost to run for Congress? A lot, according to the following summary of campaign costs for mass media expenditures for candidates for House and Senate seats in 1986:

	HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES		SENATE	
	Total $	% of Total Campaign Expenditures	Total $	% of Total Campaign Expenditures
Outdoor (billboards)	$1.6 million	0.8%	$227,440	0.12%
Radio	$10.2 million	4.8	$1.1 million	0.60
Print	$12.3 million	5.8	$968,219	0.51
TV	$23.1 million	10.9	$62.7 million	33.09

● "The candidate who's behind thinks, 'if only I can talk to people for 30 minutes they'll see things my way,'" said one Democratic consultant about expensive half-hour campaign broadcasts. "The problem is that most people would rather watch *M*A*S*H* reruns than listen to a politician for 30 minutes."

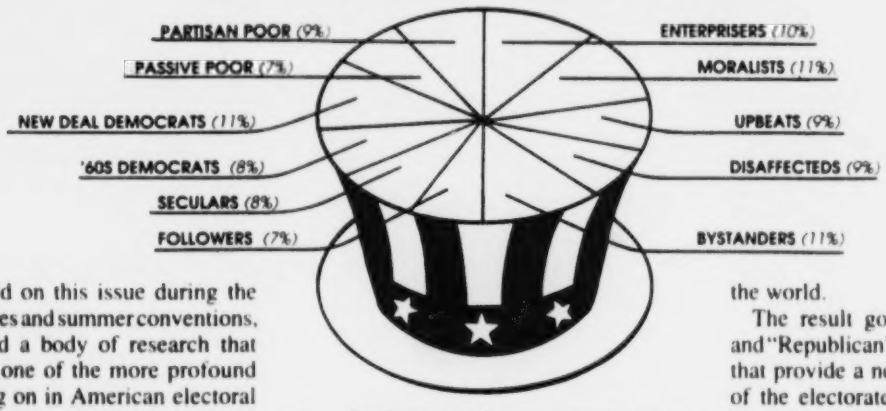
● Despite complaints from both sides, liberals and conservatives are neck and neck in treatment by broadcast news, according to a recent study completed by the Center for Media and Public Affairs. A check of 1,300 primary election stories aired by ABC, CBS and NBC during the first few months of 1988 found "good press" for Democrats 56 percent of the time, with Republicans trailing only two percent with 54 percent favorable treatment. For specific candidates, Jesse Jackson got the kindest coverage overall with 74 percent good press, and Gary Hart the worst, with only 38 percent favorable.

● Campaign promises don't always come to pass once the politicians who make them get elected. Electronic town meetings (ETMs) pioneered by Choosing Our Future, a San Francisco-based nonprofit organization, are one solution to keeping officials accountable, according to Ann Niehaus and Duane Elgin, co-founders. The ETM concept uses the telephone to gather viewer response to the televised presentation of public questions. A 1987 pilot program tallied selected viewers' reactions to *Amerika*, the mini-series on a fictional Soviet invasion of the United States. But Niehaus and Elgin, who would like to see the town meeting idea spread, have been seeking funding for programs that would apply similar technology to public issues. See *Resources* column on this page for how to contact *Choosing Our Future*.

What Are Your Voting Values?

REDEFINING THE AMERICAN ELECTORATE

GROUPS AS PERCENTAGE OF ADULT U.S. POPULATION



As we worked on this issue during the spring primaries and summer conventions, we discovered a body of research that suggests that one of the more profound changes going on in American electoral politics is the very way we identify ourselves as voters.

Indeed, a Gallup Poll of over 4,000 persons, commissioned by the Times Mirror Corporation (owners of the Los Angeles *Times* among other media properties) as part of their ongoing study of "The People, Press and Politics," concludes that the conventional view of American politics as a struggle between two dominant parties or even between "liberals" and "conservatives" is at least oversimplified and may be misleading.

What is more important, it seems, are our values, such as whether or not we believe the government should help the poor, how tolerant we are to different views and lifestyles, what kind of religious faith we profess (if any) and how we perceive the influence of communism in the world.

The result goes beyond "Democrat" and "Republican" to create 11 voting blocs that provide a new multilayered portrait of the electorate. Understanding these blocs should be useful not only for those of us who analyze elections, but also for any group planning political strategies, especially on controversial issues where coalitions are needed. Our limited space allows us to print only a glimpse of each of the groups, but we hope it gives you enough of a taste to send fora summary of the study (see Resources, p.22) — it's free.

— The Editors

Enterprisers
60% male, white, affluent, educated, married. Probusiness, antigovernment. Oppose spending for health, education and the elderly; favor Contras and Star Wars. In 1986: Voted 89% Republican.
10% adult population/16% likely electorate

Moralists
Middle-aged, middle income, white, largely southern, may be born-again Christians. Anticommunist and against abortion, pro-school prayer and defense, concerned about unemployment and deficit. In 1986: Voted 95% Republican.
11% adult population/14% likely electorate

Upbeats
White, under-40, middle income, little college, strong believers in America. Moderate Star Wars support but oppose Contra aid. Concerned about deficit and economic issues. In 1986: Voted 64% Republican.
9% of the population/9% of the electorate

Disaffecteds
Slightly more male, middle-aged and middle income, under economic pressure, many in Middle West. Antigovernment, antibusiness, promilitary. Alienated, pessimistic, divided on abortion, support capital punishment and gun control. In 1986: Voted 57% Republican.
9% adult population/7% likely electorate

Followers
Young, 25% black, 18% Hispanic, blue collar, poorly educated, eastern and southern, little interest in politics or religion, persuadable and unpredictable. Oppose Star Wars and favor spending to reduce unemployment. In 1986: Voted 65% Democratic.
7% adult population/4% electorate

Seculars
Middle-aged, white, 11% Jewish, well-educated professionals on both coasts, no religious beliefs, somewhat Democratic. Oppose high military spending, school prayer; pro-choice, concerned about deficit. In 1986: Voted 72% Democratic.
8% adult population/9% total electorate

'60s Democrats
Married women with children, 16% black, well-educated, upper-middle class. Favor social justice, peace issues with low militancy. Favor programs for minorities, oppose Star Wars. In 1986: Voted 85% Democratic.
8% adult population/11% total electorate

New Deal Democrats
Over 50, blue collar, moderate income, union members, Catholics, religious. Favor social spending not targeted to minorities, school prayer and Star Wars. Want restrictions on abortion. In 1986: Voted 92% Democratic.
11% adult population/15% total electorate

Passive Poor
Older, 31% black, less well-educated, southern, poor but only moderate financial pressure, solidly Democratic. Favor social spending, tax increases, Star Wars; oppose defense cuts. In 1986: Voted 83% Democratic.
7% adult population/6% total electorate

Partisan Poor
37% black, low income with financial pressure, poorly educated, urban and southern, strong Democrats. Divided on abortion, favor school prayer and death penalty but oppose tax increases. In 1986: Voted 95% Democratic.
9% adult population/9% likely electorate

Bystanders
White, under 30, poorly educated, mostly single, unlikely to vote. Concerned about economic issues, poverty and nuclear war. In 1986: Did not vote.
11% adult population/0% of the electorate

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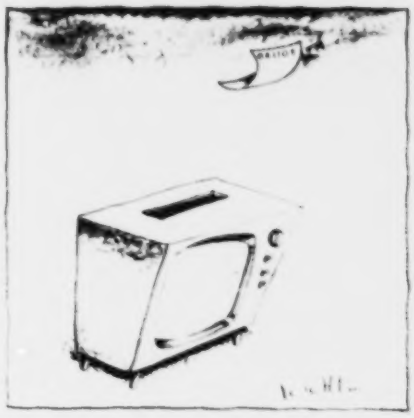

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